CATHOLIC ART QUARTERLY

THE CATHOLIC ART ASSOCIATION

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EASTER 1945
VOLUME VIII
NUMBER 2

Daprato Library
of Ecclesiastical Art

The Catholic Art Quarterly

Official Bulletin of the Catholic Art Association
Printed four times a year, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Michaelmas cycles,
at St. Cloud, Minn., with ecclesiastical approbation

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Since the *Catholic Art Quarterly* appears only four times a year and space is consequently valuable, the policy has been adopted of not publishing material that is easily accessible in secular sources unless it is presented from a new or important angle, or is given a Catholic interpretation, and is in accord with Catholic Art Association principles.

C.A.A. MEMBERSHIPS AND PRIVILEGES

SUSTAINING MEMBERS contribute $25.00 annually toward the maintenance of the Association's work, receive the *Catholic Art Quarterly*, vote in all elections, and have access to the library and the exhibits.

PATRONAL MEMBERS contribute $5.00 annually and have the above privileges.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS (schools, clubs, etc.) as a group contribute $5.00 annually, send two voting delegates to conventions, have extended exhibit privileges, receive a subscription to the *Quarterly*, and may use the library and exhibits.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS contribute $2.00 annually, receive the *Quarterly*, have one vote in all elections, may enter work in the C.A.A. exhibits, and may use the library.

National and regional conference privileges are shared by all members. Any member approved by the Advisory Board is eligible for office in C.A.A. elections.

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President's Page

MY first act as president of the C.A.A. is to thank the members of our organization for their faith in me to elect me as the head of our organization. I am new to this work and in need of direction from the members regarding the policy of our association. I am sincere when I ask for help, advice and criticism from the members. I have no fear that any of my decisions will lead our association astray, for I intend that all decisions—save the smaller routine type—will be tempered and tried by the good judgment of the older members of the association, whose opinions and criticisms I earnestly desire.

Perhaps more important at this time, is the acknowledgment of the lasting work done by our retiring president, Father Angelo Zankl, O.S.B. Father Zankl did so very much for the betterment of the association and for the *Catholic Art Quarterly*, even though he had full time duties as professor and parish priest. The work he did is the more remarkable when we recall that he was not in the best health, and that he was hospitalized on several occasions, once from a serious automobile accident.

Our prayers and thanks in great abundance are due to Father Zankl for the permanent good he has brought to the C.A.A. My suggestion is that all members join in giving him a post-card shower in which they express their thanks and promise a remembrance for him in their prayers. If this is agreeable, send a penny post-card with your appropriate thanks to Reverend Angelo Zankl, O.S.B., McKennan Hospital, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

A suggestion has been sent in by several of our members that a QUESTION - AND - ANSWER department be started in the *Quarterly*. I have discussed this with several regional directors, and thus far it has met with high approval, to the extent that all wished such a department to be started in the next issue of the *Quarterly*.

This would be a readers department. Therefore the onus for keeping such a department functioning would reside with the readers. Because an editor for this new department has not been found, I will act as temporary editor until one is located. Meanwhile, feel free to send in your questions, which should be addressed to Reverend E. M. Catich, St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Accounting for two months, November, December, 1943, to make the Fiscal Year coincide with calendar year, as the newly elected officers take office.

Funds Received		Funds Disbursed	
November 1943	$108.00	Printing Supplies	$ 48.60
December 1943	35.00	Bank Charges	1.24
Total	$143.00	Total	$ 49.84

Two months operation Balance	$ 93.66
Previous reported Bal. Oct. 31, 1943	458.64
Total Bal. December 31, 1943	$552.30

Fiscal year January 1 to December 30, 1944

Funds Received		Funds Disbursed	
January	$ 52.75	The Quarterly:	
February	75.50	Christmas, 1943	
March	72.50	Easter, 1944	
April	54.00	Pentecost, 1944	
May	45.50	Michaelmas, 1944	$958.78
June	47.00	Secretary Postage	70.00
July	42.00	Printed Supplies	73.65
August	9.00		
September	169.50		$1102.43
October	176.25		1102.43
November	188.50	Bank Charges	8.81
December	258.50		
Total Receipts	$1191.00	Total Disbursed	$1111.24
Bal. Dec. 31–43	$552.30	Bal. Dec. 30–44	$632.06
Total	$1743.30	Total	$1743.30

Very respectfully submitted

Frank F. Seaman

Treasurer.

Living To Work

His Excellency The Most Reverend Richard J. Cushing Archbishop of Boston.

THERE was once a man who was found sitting on the pavement beating his head against a wall. Someone said to him: "Why on earth are you doing that?" The man replied; "Because it feels so good when I stop." Many people think of work like that. They live for the moment when they can stop. Work, for them, has become something to escape from, not something to honor and cherish. They think of work as a necessary evil because it is a means of making money; and if they could only make enough money, they would never do any more work. You may know of people who came into money and so gave up their life-work, whatever it was, and then retired into a state of unhappy boredom. When they stopped working, they really stopped living.

Now, there is something wrong with that joyless view of work. Work is not merely an activity to produce external commodities; it was intended by Divine Providence to become a means of personal development. Unless you can build your life around some form of congenial work—unless you have what is called a career—you cannot live a full human life. Work which impairs human character, which stunts human faculties and results in human degradation, however productive of material effects it may be, contradicts the essential purpose of human existence. In the Christian view, we should not have to work just to live—that is slavery: we should live to work—that is freedom.

There are two great basic truths on which this view of work rests; first, every one has a right to be a maker, a creator; second, every one has a right to create something that will serve society.

Every one has a right to a life-work, and to a life-work which is a congenial form of making something, of producing something. Such work is not just a job. It is life, the life of an artist painting a portrait on the canvas of time. I am not saying that we all ought to be poets or painters or authors or inventors. That is one of the weak things about society today; we think of makers as a very small group of painters, poets, musicians, and

so on. But in the Christian view of work, the artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist. And I am not insinuating that we all ought to be making pots and pans—things with our hands. If we can sail a ship well, if we can cook a good meal, if we can drive an engine, plough a field, be a lawyer, a doctor, a street-sweeper, or a business man—if we can do any of these things, we are makers.

In addition, men and women have a right to that sort of work which enables them to make something for the betterment of society. Of course, there are endless ways in which you can be such a maker. Most people, if they are going to be fully alive, need the kind of making which consists of marrying, of having a family, of helping to build up the life of their community, their town, their country and the world. You are business men; your happiness depends on your success as makers of something that enriches society. For example you make it possible for the average man to buy what he needs; you make it possible for your employees to be makers in your business, which in turn brings added service to the community. You are living to work; not working to live.

Now you do not have to be a college graduate in order to make something for the betterment of society. God has given some sort of creative talent to everyone. Every living, breathing mortal was created by God to live on this earth and to enjoy his work, with the consoling conviction that no matter what kind of work he was doing he was contributing to the well-being of the community. Most of us who are in the priesthood, for instance, came from the poor. Probably some of our fathers, who made possible our education, were in the employ of some of you. They were workers, but workers with an aim, a goal. Their goal was to give their sons and daughters what they did not receive, an education to equip them for the higher things in life. And if you would like to know of their success in reaching that goal, let me reveal to you a startling fact—as far as I know, there is only one Catholic Bishop in all this country, in all the United States, who is the son of a man who ever set foot inside a college. I would hazard the opinion that a similar statement could be made of other professions. Work like that, however humble it may be, springs from the serene and unshakable conviction that the goal of the worker is a benefit to society.

The extent of large-scale production in our society presents a spectacle unique in human history. Other civilizations have brought together large numbers of workers in colossal projects like the Pyramids and the Roman roads, for instance. But these were feats extraordinary in their day, uncommon. In our day a plant which assembles vast numbers of human beings for the task of production is a commonplace. In 1929 for example there were 210,959 manufacturing establishments in the United States. One hundred thousand employed 90 per cent of the workers in the manufacturing industry. Two hundred and six establishments employed 2500 workers or more, 996 establishments employed 1000 workers or more.

Large-scale industry is the sheltering framework within which most of our population (laborer and professional man alike) must find the means wherewith to live. But can a man find a fully human life within this framework? Can he live to work, to make, to create? Can he create in the secure knowledge that what he makes will benefit society? The present pattern of our industrial system is a pyramid with responsibility allocated in a diminishing scale from top to bottom. Creation, making in its truest sense, work in the Christian sense, belongs in fullest measure only to the manager, to the executive, to the man at the top. He has responsibility, not only for his own actions, but for those of thousands of employees under him. Creative making belongs only in its most truncated, diminished form to the man at the bottom—the man at the assembly line—the man who has responsibility only for a single minute and highly simplified mechanical operation.

Two things militate against a fully human life within this framework. First, it condemns large numbers of people to hard, uncreative work—to drudgery. Not the drudgery of physical work, which the machine eliminated, but the mental drudgery of endless monotony. Second, it assigns human labor to an inferior place in the scale of human values.

There is a great difference between drudgery and hard work. Drudgery is hard work, without the joy of accomplishment; and nothing more. If that is all we have, we are in a sorrowful plight. Making things is hard work, too; only it is fascinating, because at the end you can say: "That is my handiwork; that is my creation." That sort of hard work is stimulating and therefore good for us. We hear a great deal now-a-days about the danger of developing tensions; about the value of relaxing. Yet—after all, when you're totally relaxed you're dead; to win a baseball game, to run a mile, to beat last year's sales record, to plan next year's production peak—you have to be FULL of tensions; alive, living to work.

In earlier days, man was concerned with the making of the necessities of life. The doing of those necessary works called forth the creative and contemplative faculties of man. The old-fashioned maker of bricks who made them one by one with the simplest of apparatus, had to have in his mind an image of the brick he was about to make and, strange though it may seem, that image had to be called up afresh each time. In the days when nails were made one by one, the same applied even to nails. But—the demand for bricks and nails and such things increased. Brick-making and nail-making became routine work. Brickmakers and nailmakers used less and less imagination. Creative making gave way to the physical drudgery of the first factories.

Machinery destroyed physical drudgery; it replaced it with a mental drudgery which is no less irksome. To reproduce thousands of copies of a newspaper in the days before the steam printing press was undoubtedly a grinding toil; but, if your physique would stand it, it is probable that you would rather spend twelve hours a day sawing wood than twelve hours a day pushing one button in and out. It is hard to imagine anything more stultifying, more demoralizing than a prolonged routine mechanical opera-

tion. It makes people as depersonalized as the man in the production line who was interviewed by a reporter. The newspaper man was visiting one of our large mass-production industrial plants to gather material for a human interest story. He walked beside the long conveyor belt and chatted with each man in turn. He asked their names and the nature of the small operation that each man was performing. Finally, he came to one fellow and asked him who he was. And the man replied, "I'm NUT 39." Today one hears much about the ideal of the Leisure State; if that means abolition of drudgery, it is indeed an ideal, and let us hope that it may come about; but if it means the abolition of personal "making" it would be practical slavery, because we should soon be half-dead; half-dead from boredom, half-dead from standing watch at a belt-line.

Drudgery, like taxes, is always with us. Most jobs are a mixture of drudgery and making, and we manage to take the first in stride because of the fun of the second. But if there has to be work which is sheer drudgery, whether mental or physical, then it should be distributed, just as it is shared in any decent family. And why? Because we ARE a family. We talk about the Brotherhood of man, and we ought to mean what we say. We ARE our brother's keeper. As business men and employers you can render a great service to the joy and happiness of your employees by convincing them that their daily task is not one of monotonous, hopeless drudgery, but that it is the work of a maker, of a creator, the work of one who shares, the work of one who is making a definite, constructive contribution to the business that employs him and also to society. Such employees are contented and happy, helpful to one another and to all about them. They, indeed, work not to live, but they live to work. And the business is prosperous.

If drudgery stultifies human faculties, a system geared exclusively to the profit motive reduces human labor to the status of a commodity—something to be bought and sold on the sole basis of supply and demand. The grossest outrage committed against the worker in our times has been the materialistic philosophy that the pursuit of wealth and station is the highest and most honorable pursuit that a man can follow; the philosophy that ascribes a halo of righteousness to men who have achieved material success, regardless of the methods which they may have employed to gain their end. Here is the way a wag once expressed it by paraphrasing the comparative degrees of an adjective: "Young man, Get on; Get Honor; Get Honest."

That philosophy leaves out one great fact; the highest type of Christian Humanity is Christ Himself, a Worker with His hands, the Son of a Worker, the Friend and associate of workers. By choosing the vocation of a carpenter He dignified manual labor for all time. The work of the craftsman's hands produces wealth, it is true; yet it has a true nobility of its own as the worker has been inspired by his love for the work, as long as he is living to work. But if he is motivated solely by the spurs of avarice, the nobility of his work vanishes into thin air.

You are probably saying, how about the profit motive? There is nothing wrong with the possession of honestly-gained wealth; but wealth brings social obligations and social responsibility; the selfish possession of

wealth is degrading. This idea of responsibility was once expressed like this: "If a man will not work, neither let him eat." Karl Marx didn't write that; St. Paul did. It means that you have a right to a reward in terms of wages or profits or interest IF you have done something for society that merits a reward; IF you have been a maker, a producer of something that betters society. You have the right to enough prosperity to secure for yourself and your family a dignified and fairly comfortable way of life.

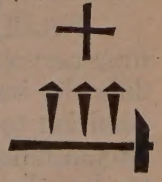
BUT—and it is a big BUT—while there is nothing wrong with the profit motive, there is everything wrong with a society built exclusively on the profit motive. First, there is everything wrong with the man who says: "My only motive in working is to make money." Secondly, there is everything wrong with the man who says: "This is going to pay, and that is all I care about it." If you want to do a thing because it pays, all right; but you must make sure that it does not harm society and that it is just in itself.

So—within the framework of our modern industrial structure, two factors, drudgery and the extreme of the profit-motive, militate against a full human life. What is the remedy? For joyless, mechanical, slaving hard work of drudgery, I would substitute the thrilling joy of craftsmanship, of creative making. For over-emphasis on the profit-motive I would substitute a new emphasis on love of God and neighbor.

Man, like God, stamps his image on his works. Something of our personality, something that no other force in the universe can contribute, goes into our labors and makes them really a part of ourselves. This is the foundation of the price, the affection, even the tenderness of the true craftsman for the finished product of his labors.

We have lost much of the exquisite joy of the old craftsman who would leisurely run a hand over the smooth perfection of the work he had just completed. What a time he had getting this particular part of the work done; how he planned, dreamed, worried; how eagerly he went back to the job as his dreams began to take shape; what secret pride there is in this child of his genius, even though none of his works seem quite to catch the elusive beauty and breath-taking grace of his dreams.

Watch a carpenter (a real carpenter); he never bullies the wood, he never mauls it or forces it against the grain; he knows its qualities and treats them with respect. And so what he makes, he makes well and beautifully. If we believe that the wood is God's creature, like ourselves, and that what we make is our offering to God, there will be a dignity and warmth about what we make, even if we are not first-class workmen. It is because careful craftsmanship has lent beauty even to the pots and pans of bygone civilizations that we treasure them and keep them in our art galleries. Can you imagine future civilizations keeping specimens of our kettles in their art galleries, except, perhaps as curiosities?



The craftsman worships God in his work. This keeps his work social. Experience has taught us that the economists were terribly wrong when they constructed their hypothetical "economic man" who would serve

society best by serving his own selfish interests first and last. We are always tempted to play our own hands for our own sakes, regardless of the rest of the world. We may be devoted to the cause of humanity; but it is odd how easily that can become a devotion to one part of humanity and a hatred of other parts, unless we are continually being called to account by something greater than humanity. That something is God. And for that reason, I would substitute for our present over-emphasis on the profit-motive, a renewed and vigorous emphasis on love of God.

God must be in our work, in our business, in every phase of our daily life. We must become the sort of people fit to share the life of God. Then

we shall in fact be just—and more than just, for the law of love goes far beyond the law of justice. Herein lies the essence of genuine happiness. It has been proved over and over again that if you set out simply to find happiness, you never find it. Just as you think you have it in your grasp, it eludes you. It is only when you abandon the idea and set out to make other people happy, to do good unselfishly, that you suddenly discover that you are really happy at last.

I think the same is true of society. There may be trials and heartaches before us, and the problems that arise may be great, but we have the stuff of happiness within us. In helping others to happiness, we are on the road to the same goal ourselves. But if we set out simply to build a paradise on earth for ourselves, we shall surely fail. You remember the famous saying after the last war was over: "Now we're all brothers—all Cains and Abels."

A very practical application of the foregoing point comes to mind. Before many months will have passed, it seems inevitable that we shall have in our midst many young men who have returned from war bearing permanent evidence of their heroism on their bodies. Some of these fine young men will be partial casualties. They will probably come to you looking for employment. A war which was not of their making has seriously disarranged their life. Once they will have returned, they are going to look for a chance to begin again. It will be the most natural temptation to reject them, for it may seem that their physical handicap will seriously mar their usefulness. But I ask you to remember that a handicap may often be the incentive that will drive them on to even greater accomplishment than they might otherwise have achieved.

Recall, if you will, that the famous historian Francis Parkman suffered from nervous exhaustion and eye trouble which permitted him to write with difficulty but six lines a day for months at a time. Did Parkman abandon his ambition to become a historian, as many a one would have done under the circumstances? On the contrary he dug himself in more resolutely, struggled for long hours over original manuscripts scarcely legible, through innumerable documents and volumes, and wrote his superb histories on paper with a wire screen to guide his hand.

In spite of ill-health which baffled him every day for forty years, Charles Darwin worked continuously over his data, until, as he said, his mind seemed to have become a sieve for the sifting of facts, until from the travail there emerged his epoch-making book, "The Origin of the Species," which furnished at least a generalization that has enriched all branches of biological science.

William Wilberforce was a small frail man in the constant throes of ill-health. Boswell went once to hear him speak in the House of Commons and said afterward: "I saw what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table: but as I listened, he grew, and grew, until the shrimp became a whale." For twenty years he was obliged by his physician to resort to opium to alleviate the pain that racked his body, but he had the courage never to increase the dose. His own sufferings enabled him to appreciate more keenly the lot of the afflicted and the downtrodden, and to the mitigation of their misery he devoted the energies of a life-time, fighting with a stout courage that would have done credit to the strongest of men. His labors won for him the title of "Attorney-General of the Unprotected and the Friendless."

Over his tomb in Westminister Abbey is carved one of the noblest inscriptions to be found in the entire Valhalla of England's honored dead. "He removed from England the guilt of the African slave trade," it read, "and prepared the way for the abolition of slavery in every colony in the Empire." Here, indeed, was the conversion of the liability of continuous ill-health into the asset of a glorious achievement. For if Wilberforce had enjoyed robust health, he would probably never have acquired, one suspects, that profound sympathy for the afflicted that constituted the compelling motivation of his life.

I would prefer his epitaph to any found upon the tombs of generals. For unlike military leaders who march to fame over the bleeding bodies of men, Wilberforce won his niche in the hearts of the people of England by lifting up from their condition of suffering and degradation the most unfortunate of God's children.

The great masterpieces of literature, oratory, art, and music have not come as a rule from some shining Apollo or robust Hercules free from the handicaps of ill-health, poverty and affliction. They have come from the handicapped and the shut-ins—from dyspeptics like Carlyle, from hunchbacks like Pope, from neurotics like Poe, from the blind like Homer and Milton, from initial stutterers like Demosthenes, from the deaf like Beethoven. They are the type of men whom history discloses struggling over blood-stained roads and

> Toiling up new Calvaries
> Ever with the Cross that turns not back.

Robert Louis Stevenson, dogged by tuberculosis that sunk its teeth so deeply into his lungs that no medicine or change of climate could loosen their hold, could have become a sour cynic questioning the justice of the universe and throwing his pen away in futile disgust. But no! He teased from his affliction its hidden elements of value. It brought his thoughts

more frequently to God and His providential government of the universe and of human life as well. More revealing became certain verses of the Bible to which he had paid but scant attention before, such verses as: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, better are you than many sparrows."

A new tenderness crept into his poetry, a mellow wisdom and beauty into his prose. Into poetry of what wistful tenderness did he transpose the sentiment of St. Peter, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He hath care of you," when, with the shadows lengthening about him he wrote from his island home in the Pacific:

> The embers of the day are red
> Beyond the murky hill:
> The kitchen smokes, the bed
> In the darkling house is spread,
> And the great woods are shrill . . .
> So far have I been led,
> Lord, by Thy will:
> So far have I followed, Lord,
> And wondered still.
> The breeze from the embalmed land
> Blows sudden toward the shore
> And clasps my cottage door . . .
> I hear the signal, Lord, I understand.
> The night at Thy command
> Comes.
> I will eat and sleep, and will not question more.

Perhaps the physically handicapped young man who comes to you seeking employment will be a great craftsman. Nature always offers compensation after the loss of a faculty. The blind develop keen perception through the senses of hearing and touch. The young man who can no longer walk may acquire uncanny skill with his hands. And as you personally help him to live to work, you will surely be making a genuine contribution to society and your fellow man. You, too, will be living to work. For a man's life-work is not only for himself. It is his way of helping the human family. And you will necessarily be happy because you are serving another, because you are doing good. You will have the loving patience of the true craftsman as you shape and mould this broken life into one of usefulness. You will have the happiness and satisfaction of knowing that you have spared a fellow-man a life of drudgery; instead of working to live, you will have taught him how to live to work. You will stand amazed like the craftsman before the beauty of this work, wondering how you could have produced it.

In a program of this sort, there will be failures; not all men will respond to your kindness or your training. But neither are all your investments

good. Unless you are going to make profit the sole motive in all your dealings, you will be willing to chance a loss of this sort, especially when it pays such munificent dividends if the experiment works. It will make you a responsible and happy maker.

The war has brought us one tremendous blessing; it has restored to us a corporate sense, the feeling that we are a family. Many people are happy in a way they never were before, in spite of all the horrors of war, for the simple reason that they are living something of a family life with their fellow men, helping them and being helped by them. It is absolutely vital that we should cling fast to that when the war ends. If we do not, if we sink back again into the old spirit of selfishness, we shall be in a sadder state than ever before. But if we do cling fast, to it and set about remaking the world for God and for one another, perhaps we shall succeed beyond our dreams.

That form of making, however, means hard work. It is no use to be idly wishing for it. It means hard thinking, and thinking together. It means a united and invincible will that, when the means are thought out, they shall not be made ineffective by stupidity or guile, by greed or selfishness; but they shall be put into effect with speed and thoroughness, so that America may be a land where all men may hold securely to the human heritage, the heritage of being makers, and therefore of being fully men, and therefore of being free men.

All this means a revolution in ours ways of thought. It means refusing to think in terms of cash returns, but trying instead to make as God makes—for the goodness and joy of the job. It means having the power and the courage to say; this or that is not worth making; this or that is not worth doing; and because such things are not worthy of us as free and responsible men, we cast them aside and will have nothing to do with them. But it means also having the will to declare ourselves in this fashion; and we shall not have the will unless we think like makers and not like servants of Mammon; we shall not have the will unless we live to work and not just work to live.

Let no one dare to say that it is impossible. It is not only possible: it is actually being done, now, at this very moment. When we are making weapons of war, we do not ask whether or not the job will pay? We ask one thing only; will the product be good? The revolution has been brought about perhaps without our realizing it. This is the danger; we did not bring it about and perhaps, when the pressure of events which brought it about has passed, we shall be ready to lapse back into the old ways. That is why a revolution is still necessary; a revolution within ourselves. How hideous it would be to have to confess that the thing that can be done under the pressure of the desire to kill cannot be done when the motive is to bring life and dignity to America. How hideous to have to say that once more we have chosen Mammon and rejected the Kingdom of God and His Justice.

It is for us to say once and for all: "That shall not be." It is for us to see to it that it shall not be. It is for us to say:

"I will not cease from mortal strife,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem."

—the city where finance is made sound by serving industry, and industry is made sound by serving man, and man is made happy by serving God and neighbor and loving God and one another.

Considerations on Eric Gill

Walter Shewring

TWO new books by Eric Gill* have heartened his disciples by their mature reaffirmation of characteristic principles and their reinforcement of many familiar positions; they have also interested many who before his death knew little of him but were won to some allegiance by his *Autobiography*. At the same time they have called forth a number of criticisms—voiced in reviews of the books themselves and in general discussions of his work, in print or in conversation—which since they repeat similar criticisms in the past may be taken to spring from difficulties sincerely and widely felt. Given the importance of his teaching, these misunderstandings of it deserve attention, and I therefore propose to examine a few controverted points with such amplification or illustration as experience shows to be desirable.

There is first of all the matter of "fine arts" and common arts, or of art and the crafts. Most of our contemporaries abruptly disjoin them; Eric Gill always refused to do so, and it has sometimes been imagined that he blinded himself to a real difference between two species of things. This is certainly not the case; he often made the distinction, and in one form or another it may be found in most of his books—necessary arts, ministering formally to physical needs, and arts of "recreation" (in a strong sense of the word,) ministering formally to intellectual needs. But in the first place he subordinated this distinction to the fundamental character common to all the arts ("the well-making of what needs making," "the skill of man in doing and making"); in the second place he gave the warning that the line between art and craft, between liberal or recreative arts and servile or necessary arts, is in practice hard to draw. Does this mean that picture-painting, for instance, is obviously a "fine art," and house-painting obviously a craft, but that it is difficult to decide whether carpentry and calligraphy are "arts" or are "merely" crafts? Yes, with some reservations; but it also means more than that. It means that the necessary and the recreative, the servile and the liberal, are by no means exclusive of each other; the intellectual interacts with the physical, the spiritual is not unnecessary, and object of household use may embody a metaphysical symbolism. And in application to concrete instances, it means that for all ages to some extent, and for ours to a great extent, a particular human work lies often outside the category conveniently assigned it—perhaps below, perhaps above.

Let me example two actual works. One is a carving by Brancusi, reproduced in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* with the article "Sculpture Technique." For the modern critic, it belongs pre-eminently to the category of "fine art." It is entitled "Bird in Space," and its appraiser in the *Encyclopaedia* calls it "a simple form so subjective that it has no aesthetic

It All Goes Together (Devin-Adair, New York, 1944)

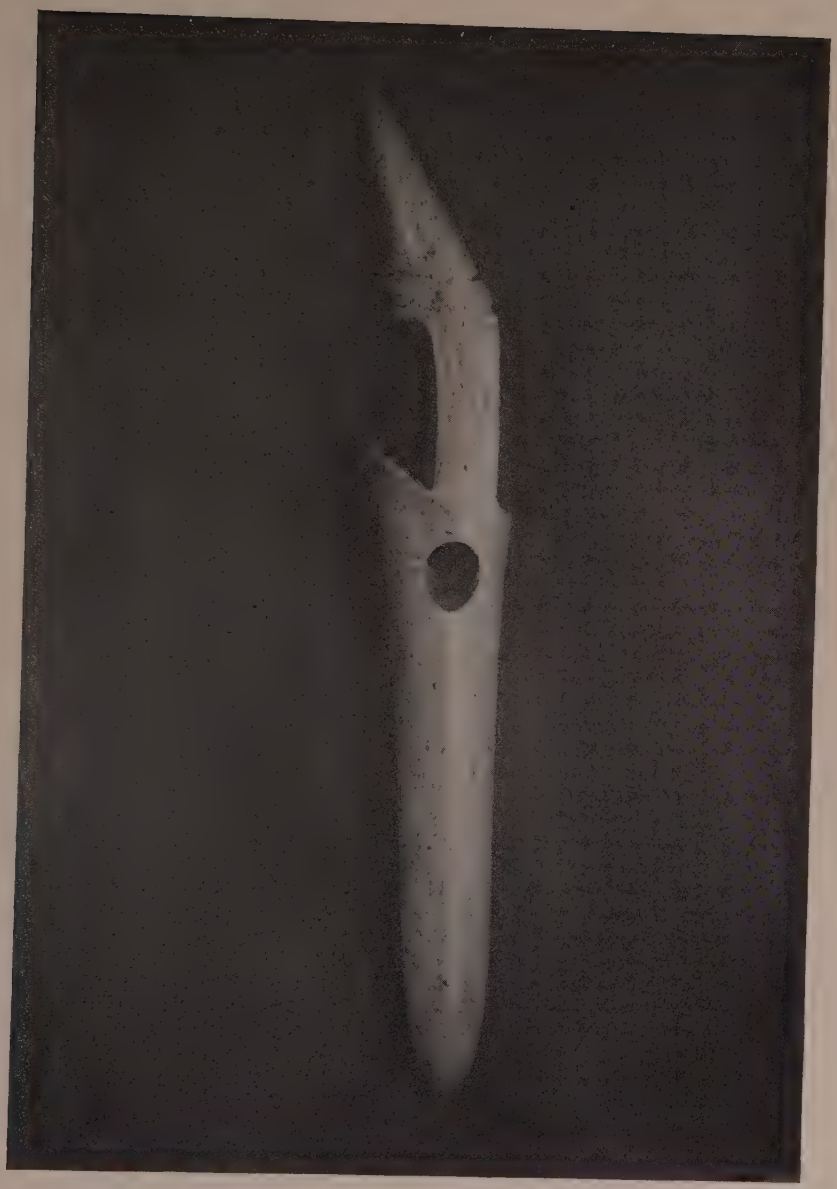
meaning except to the artist." The worth of the carving is unrelated to birds or flight; it consists in the subtleties of visible shape which please us by correspondence with the symmetries of the mind and which ultimately imply (though the sculptor might not acknowledge this) a patterned, ordered and God-created universe. My second example comes from the Pacific Islands and is in the possession of Dr. Coomaraswamy.* For the modern critic, it certainly belongs to the category of "applied art"; it is a harpoon head of whalebone, completely adapted to its purpose, though making a theological point by the introduction of a little carved face to signify "Death or God as the ender as well as the beginner of life." This carving is unquestionably a "useful" object; yet viewed as a shaped and patterned thing, it has the same subtleties, the same appeal and implications, as Brancusi's "pure sculpture." As W. R. Lethaby once remarked, "Artificer and artist seem to be two forms of the same word. One has gone up in the world, the other down. Which is which?"

To illustrate the same thesis from a somewhat different point of view —if we look at a reasonably well-made vase by a modern craftsman, then at a reasonably good Post-Impressionist painting, we may easily acknowledge the painting as of a higher order of things than the vase; if in visiting the British Museum we look first at Sung vases, then at the *Three Bodhisattvas* of the same period, the pre-eminence of the painting is still more easily acknowledged. But what if we turn our contract to ancient vases and modern picture? The scale of comparison has ceased to be obvious, and it might indeed be maintained that everything of value which the modern painter has done has also been done by the Chinese potter. Or again, a modern small crucifix, a modern page of calligraphy, may be quite remarkably good and undeniably works of art without breaking free from a certain circumscription; but St. Cuthbert's Cross at Durham, a page of the *Codex Sinaiticus* —these are things which we are bound to view otherwise; looking at them, we think to ourselves, "After that, there is nothing more to be said."

From such examples it seems fair to conclude that while every age has its own more or less consistent scale of the arts, comparison between various ages may reveal some intersection, and that this is due to the relative greatness or decadence, normality or abnormality, of the ages themselves. If one holds (and Eric Gill very strongly held it) that ours is a decadent and abnormal age, it will appear as inevitable that no art in it can reach its full scope; and it is by their scope, not by their essential nature, that traditional thought divides the higher and lower arts. Hence on the one hand we have the modern craftsman, working often most admirably but against the grain of his time, and unable to achieve in his isolation what was achieved in his own craft when it was "a thousand men thick."* And we have on the other hand the self-conscious modern painter, developing refinements of pure pattern and shape which after all seem scarcely to go beyond the best

*It is also reproduced in Graham Carey's *Pattern* (John Stevens Pamphlets Rhode Island, 1938.)

*"Art must be everywhere. It cannot exist in isolation, or only one man thick. It must be a thousand men thick." (W. R. Lethaby.)



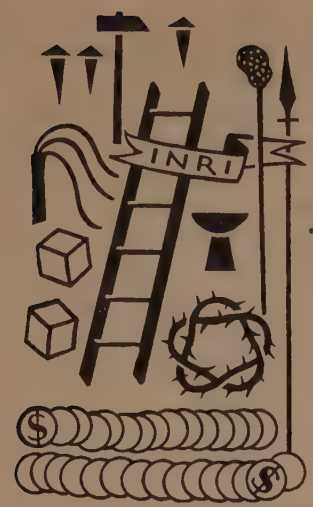
Harpoon head of whalebone from the Pacific Islands, in the possession of Dr. Coomaraswamy.

examples of ancient craftsmanship, so that one sometimes wonders whether the admitted gifts of such persons might not be better employed in following and raising the arts of common life.† And in the painter's case as against the craftsman's we may say that there is a *deliberate* limitation of scope; for one of the most evident things in the painting of great and normal ages is that it provides a direct intellectual content as well as the indirect implications of pattern which it shares with the lower degrees of art. Thus the particular greatness of the *Three Bodhisattvas* as compared with the Sung vases lies in the communication of the Buddhist idea of sanctity—a communication effected not by a catalogue title but by the painting as a whole. Again, there are Chinese paintings of musicians which imply and impart an understanding of the whole nature of music—something which simply does not enter into the paintings of recent centuries, where persons and instruments are means to the imitation of textures, to experiments with light and shade, or merely to "abstract design," according to date and fashion. It is precisely this kind of intellectual content which modern painters characteristically‡ disown in their fear of the anecdotal; and the lack of anything like it in typical works of our time is a major cause of that alienation of the common man which marks the present relations of art and society. For the common man, however untrained in the matter of art and however prone to equate catalogue titles with real content, is reasonable at least in his expectation that a painted picture should normally be "about something"—an expectation once satisfied in the caves of Ajanta or the Camposanto of Pisa. Baulked of it now, he comes to agree with the "artist" himself that art is an affair for a handful of exceptional persons sundered from ordinary society; and in spite of the wish of a few artists to elevate the lay mind, the wish of a few laymen that art would come down within their reach, the main antithesis grows meanwhile. Like the Stylite in Gibbon, the artist has ascended a pediestal whose height has been raised with passing years. The crowd below may be envious or indifferent; the hermit has reached his "last and lofty station," and may almost at any moment now "expire without descending."

The divorce of the fine arts from workaday life—by now an evident fact—is deplored by some, welcomed by others. To these latter—to those artists and critics and connoisseurs who hold that now for the first time art has won its true status—the position taken by Eric Gill is of course antipathetic, but should not therefore be unintelligible. That artists should actually pride themselves on isolation from the community was a thing naturally repugnant to one who remembered that every artist is also a man, and that every man in his life's work has duties to the community. The claim that fine art has beauty as its private prerogative was a patent ab-

†"This is, in fact, the diagnosis of the shortcoming of all our modern individualistic art, that seven-eighths of it is the work of men who ought to be servants, and not masters; while the work of the one-eighth (if there be so large a proportion of genius) is necessarily intelligible only to a very small audience." (Coomaraswamy, *Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* (1913), p. 24.)

‡Even today, there remain some painters who stand outside the heresy of "pure form" and who do communicate intellectual content as understood above; they therefore escape the circumscription which other painters impose on themselves, but not that imposed by the character of the age itself.



surdity to one who had philosophical foundations; it is easy to show that beauty inheres in anything that is what it should be; that it is to be found in the works of nature and in the truths of metaphysics (though many critics of Eric Gill have little use for either*); and that as far as the arts are concerned, it is one of a number of qualities which belong to all alike. "Every artist," says St. Bonaventure,† "intends the work made to be beautiful, useful, and lasting, and a work is prized and welcomed when it answers these three conditions"—a dictum as true of a chair as of an altarpiece. As for the actual achievement of modern painters, sculptors and architects, Eric Gill was very far from despising it. In his earlier days, particularly, he went out of his way to defend such work against misguided criticism, and to the end of his life there were individual artists for whom he reserved the warmest admiration—one may mention especially David Jones. But as he entered more deeply into the work of other times and the principles that informed it—as he studied the Middle Ages in the light of St. Thomas and the great Eastern cultures in the light of their own traditional thought—he saw with increasing clearness the difference dividing such civilizations from our own. The best minds of the modern movement did indeed attain a kind of greatness, and to compare them with mere academicians was to compare the living with the dead; but though it is much to be alive, there are after all degrees of life, and what were these modern masters to those of the past? Sienese primitives, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, the colossal Buddha and rock-cut Kapila of Anuradhapura—must we not acknowledge these things not only as greater than anything of our own age but as great in a higher mode? So too with the "new sensibilities" which modern artists so often claimed; the claim might be just in its degree, but then every age has its own sensibilities—not to speak of things which are supreme, Rajput paintings, early Japanese prints, even some Greek vases have refinements of sensibility which are manifestly denied to us, and if in works of the truly great ages such qualities may be less remarked, it is not that they are absent but that they are subordinated to spiritual depth and intellectual power.

There is a further and strangely neglected consideration which bears directly on all this matter of fine and useful arts. This is that the useful arts themselves—what in one sense of the word may be called the *common* crafts—are in fact so far from common in our industrialized world that it is rare to find any understanding of their nature and implications. There are

*In the welter of modern aesthetic schools it is difficult to generalize, but contempt of natural beauty is fashionable in places. "Real flowers!" said an eminent French engraver to an otherwise "modern hostess. "How vulgar! I will make you some in mother-of-pearl." On the other hand, there are those who collect mineral and vegetable formations of suitably "significant form" to range with their Henry Moores. As for metaphysics among the devotees of fine art, it is better to be silent.

†*De reductione artium.*

many corollaries to this; the immediate point is that those who most emphasize the division of art and the crafts—whether popular critics or academic philosophizers—are usually ignorant of one of the two classes of things they so confidently compare. I do not complain of this ignorance in itself (it is natural in any of us today and for many reasons is hard to overcome); my complaint is that much argument on this matter—conducted not from first principles but by induction from specified instances—is stultified by the contrast of something familiar to the writer with something else which is really quite unfamiliar but is not recognized to be such. "Here is art," says the reasoner in effect—and he quotes examples from modern painting and sculpture and architecture, perhaps from novels and music too. This is ground he knows thoroughly; he has seen hundreds of works by Matisse and Chirico and Picasso and Epstein and Le Corbusier; he probably lives among modern artists; he has seen them at work and discussed with them; he is well acquainted with all their points of view. But he then proceeds with "Here is craft," for which he produces perhaps three instances (a table, a cup, a knife and fork,) faintly praising the handmade object, then dismissing it as a thing scarcely more beautiful (if at all) than the best machine-made substitute, and in any case incommensurable with a painting or sculpture on which highly individual genius has lavished its sensibilities. Comparison in these terms is fallacious on many counts, though some of them need not concern us now (for instance, its probable disregard of household objects from China and Peru which in other circumstances might be more flatteringly appraised.) The chief points are three: that it is likely the critic understands far less than he supposes of the actual examples given; that he forgets the whole multitude of crafts of which he knows nothing; and that he ignores the cumulative effect of the sum of the crafts.

I suspect the critic's understanding of even the works he chooses; this because he commonly speaks of them in words which would be as applicable to quite different things. He will talk about a table as if it were a would-be painting or sculpture, something therefore which a modern may adequately appreciate in terms of lines and masses; he prescinds from its material, its making, its maker. Criticism of one thing as if it were another is usually bad criticism*; and to consider a work of art apart from its making is not to consider it as a work of art. When he praises a given picture, the critic is conscious of it as a communication of one man to other men; his words may be limited to the thing before him, but he makes his judgment not merely in the light of genuine understanding of a piece of human workmanship, but in a penumbra of general sympathy with the aims and way of life of this painter and other painters. There is little comparable in the case of the table. Carpentry may be known to the critic as a hobby practised by an acquaintance, as something once casually discussed with genteel purveyors of "arts-and-crafts"; but is it known to him, is it present to his judgment, as the work of a man's life, with traditional rules and with social

*Some women in judging pictures appear to see the colours as those of dress materials, deploring "clashes" which do not exist in the paints as such. On the other hand, some aesthetes criticize colours in nature, supposing them to be would-be paints.

implications? Probably not; hence on his part a superficial aesthetic judgment (toying, it may be, with the "pattern" of nails which ought simply never to have been used,) a lack of insight which prompts him to ask why anyone achieving so little as this should care to use his hands at all. Precisely; were there in carpentry no more than the critic sees, there would be every reason for leaving it to machines.

But suppose the critic really to have an intimate knowledge of the two or three crafts referred to; there are countless others outside his province, each a possible subject for well-informed appraisal, each with its title to be considered before judgment is pronounced on the whole body of crafts. Dyeing, spinning, weaving; printing and paper-making; metalwork of all kinds; lettering in stone and paint and ink; hedging and thatching and gardening—these are a mere few of numberless crafts whose products environ us but whose nature and processes seldom awake enquiring interest. Yet every one of them has its due manner of practice, its rights and wrongs, its subtleties of achievement, it ambushes for the unwary. And ignorance of such things, however trivial in this or that example, has a cumulative effect unnoticed by its victims but acutely marked, to a man like Eric Gill, possessing unusual knowledge of many crafts and analogical sympathy extending to all. When Mr. Smith the connoisseur* was displaying his private collection of Braque and Derain, it was no great matter that he should take for cotton the scarf of unpolished silk worn by his guest; we all have our blind spots. But when one must face in turn the bogus modernity of his house, the pathetic furniture (visibly wilting in framework as in fashion,) the ignoble and ill-assorted rugs, the frankly vulgar tea-service—it became clear that Mr. Smith's discernment did not penetrate far even in visual things which might have been thought to be well within his scope.† Besides, it was difficult to forget that the kindly "invitation to view" had been couched in an uncouth hand under a barbarous letter-heading on meretricious paper (it was to be followed by an unbelievable Christmas card.) And here were the daughters of the house, apportioning their attention between illustrated weeklies, a lush recording of harmonized folk-songs, and uncritical reminiscences of last evening's jazz; here were the children, playing with toys of revolting shape and worse material—all to the evident satisfaction of the connoisseur himself. Well—as far as kindness and family virtues went, Mr. Smith might be the salt of the earth, but it was out of the question to give the name of "culture" to an outlook and way of life where sensibility and intelligence were at one point hypertrophied and were utterly atrophied at a hundred others. Contrariwise, it was possible to recall certain other households—in Southern France, elsewhere in Europe, even in some sequestered parts of England—where there was no "fine art" about but where everything that was there was good—house, furniture, pottery; talk and music; dress and food and garden—where everything made and done was well made and well done, was one with itself and its surroundings and with

*I should perhaps make it clear that what follows is a composite picture, not a particular portrait.

†A reviewer of *Last Essays* reproved its author for "his failure to distinguish between the useful and the fine arts," but praised the accompanying engravings under the designation of "woodcuts."

a whole view of things; for a way of life so integrated, culture was not an idle word.

It should not be hard to see that understanding of any craft has in most times and places been closely linked with proximity—physical proximity to the exercise of the craft, spiritual proximity to the craftsman's aims and ideas. In the English villages and small towns of a century ago it was natural and usual to see the craftsman at work and to assimilate by direct experience the principles of his making and the qualities of its product. Every man to his trade (though trade did not mean trading*); and a hundred trades, all different but analogous, could teach one what good workmanship was, what tests would reveal slipshod and bungled work, what was meant by the maker's responsibility, what standards would be expected of oneself when one chose one's own trade. And though there are some refinements of workmanship whose perfect appraisal belongs to the workman himself and to the most enlightened patron ("Who but the Raja and the goldsmith should know the value of the jewel?"), yet a society such as this provided at least those indispensable grounds of good judgment which so sadly are lacking now; the intelligent maker was also the intelligent user and buyer, and the general interchange fostered that sympathy which draws "the good singer to the good scribe"†. But the community of a hundred years ago was already in social decadence and was soon to decay further. The children crowding about the blacksmith then had had ancestors who had crowded about the builders, painters and glassmakers of the village church, makers whose way of making was strange enough to the nineteenth century; and the next generation might see the blacksmith go. Once begun, such disintegration spreads insensibly. The Cotswold farmer whose house was traditionally well tiled has sons who have never seen a tiler at work; for them or their sons again the old tiles are no more than a curiosity which may be left to dilapidate or sold to a collector. What the village loses from its inheritance is something more than the visible and material; another sermon has gone with the stones, and kinship with crafts and craftsmen has faded further towards extinction.*

Our own generation has reached the last limits of remoteness from everything that is meant by the crafts. To the mass of the population village life is unknown, and if through necessity or for pleasure some numbers return to the countryside, the chances are now against their finding the vestiges of a working tradition. Few country places have kept a mason or smith, a wheelwright or carpenter; and where will one find them all together? Some purely agricultural crafts—hedging, for instance, and rick-making—are still everywhere practised, but they

*Cf. Pepys: "At home practising to sing, which is now my great trade" (*Diary*, 12 June, 1661.)

†St. Thomas, *S.T.*, I-II, 27, 3, ad 2.

*I find that Dr. Coomaraswamy has given a similar instance from Ceylon. "The capacity for good work in making and laying tiles is dying out, so that it is increasingly difficult to get it, and a majority of persons scarcely are aware that good work was ever done, or can recognize it when they see it." (*Mediaeval Sinhalese Art* (1908), p. 228.)

pass unrecognized by the townsman, who as likely as not mistakes their operations for those of nature. As for the crafts of the town, in the nature of things they still exist—in traditional or in untraditional fashion, the things we use must all be made somewhere—but who in a great town of today is likely to know the whereabouts of the silversmiths and the carpet-makers, the printers, the saddlers, the potters? Or suppose their workshops found; how could one summon courage to go inside and talk with the men, to see them using their hands and hear from the elders what changes in their manner of work had been brought by the machine? Modern customs forbid so human a proceeding; the small workshop is as a rule inaccessible, and with it a fund of knowledge which neither the studio nor the factory can supply. For those who seriously wish to understand the crafts it remains to glean what experience they can from such direct contact as it is possible to make; to approach the matter respectfully, aware that the principles which they see applied in one or two crafts have been and are applied with characteristic differences in a multitude of others; and to supplement these slender resources by studying authentic records of traditional craftsmanship in its natural environment—such things as Sturt's *Wheelwright's Shop*, Rose's *Village Carpenter* and *Good Neighbors*, Benfield's *Purbeck Shop*, the chapter on craftsmen in Massingham's *English Countryman* and (further afield and with ampler background), Coomaraswamy's *Indian Craftsman*, Marco Pallis' *Peaks and Lamas*, and Firth's *Art and Life in New Guinea*. Without some such preamble it is hard indeed for the great number of men today—for the intelligentsia no less than the laity—to enter far into the thought of Eric Gill and to reconcile as he did the notions of artist and workman, art and work.

Work—the whole doctrine of it is central to his philosophy, a stumbling-block to the doubter, a growing illumination to those who once accept it. What I have said already has touched the arts in a merely external way; I have been concerned with the spectator's point of view. But true art, in Lethaby's words, "is *the evidence of the workman's joy in his work*. Art should be looked on not as enjoyment and luxury to the buyer, but as life and breath to the maker—and extend the idea to cover everything of quality and goodness in things made by hands, and further to beautiful care of the tilled earth." When the nature of work is misunderstood, the nature of art is also misunderstood.

"As an indispensable means towards gaining over the world that mastery which God wishes for his glory, all work has an inherent dignity and at the same time a close connection with the perfection of the person. This is the noble dignity and privilege of work, which is not in any way cheapened by the fatigue and the burden which has to be borne, as the effect

of original sin, in obedience and submission to the will of God." This pronouncement of Pius XII* applies without exception to all kinds of work which it naturally falls to man to perform. To use human powers to impose order on things, to transform existing material in accordance with human will, to shape what is outside oneself to something determined by oneself—that is work, Adam's privilege, the privilege of the human person, without which the person is incomplete. To suffer fatigue in so doing, to be able to do less than one would, to feel continually the weariness of the flesh—that is Adam's curse, though it too has lost its sting through the labour of Christ in the workshop and Mary in the home.

Work in general—the humblest as well as the highest kind—has in traditional teaching been regarded as a means to asserting human dignity and to the collaboration of man with Heaven. This is signified by Christopher Smart in his symbolism of the third pillar of knowledge for the third day of creation.

> Eta with living sculpture breathes,
> With verdant carvings, flow'ry wreathes
> Of never-wasting bloom;
> In strong relief his goodly base
> All instruments of labour grace,
> The trowel, spade, and loom.

In ancient civilization outside our own tradition the same view of things has been explicitly held—above all in regard to agriculture, as the most fundamental and primary kind of work. Hence those solemn inaugurations of ploughing or harvesting by a traditional ruler—the most famous example comes from China, but there are others elsewhere†. In contrast with this is the opinion—characteristic of decadent civilizations and therefore of ours—that work with one's hands is a degrading necessity and that man is ennobled by its avoidance.

This hostility to the notion of work comes partly of course from softness and partly from snobbishness; it was so in ancient Greece, it is so today.‡ But deeper than this is a Manichaean attitude to the world, reluctance to view the physical universe as good and holy in all its parts, distrust of common things and of common men. Those who honour the man of genius at the expense of mankind may be expected to behave similarly towards material things. To certain men a mountain is venerable, but the

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*Allocution of Christmas Eve, 1942. Cf. Ecclesiasticus vii, 16: "Hate not laborious works, or husbandry ordained by the Most High."

†The classic passage for China is from the *Record of Rites*. "The Son of Heaven in his own person, taking the plough in his carriage of state, leads the Three Dukes, the Nine Ministers, the great Lords and the high officers of state to plough the field of God. Three furrows the Son of Heaven turns up, five furrows the Dukes, nine furrows the ministers and lords. They return, and in the great chamber with the dukes, ministers, lords, and officers all in waiting, the goblet is lifted and the word given, 'The wine of labour'." (Hughes translation.) Compare the following for Ceylon: "Great chiefs were not ashamed to hold the plough in their own hands, and it was thought becoming for the young men to reap at least a part of the harvest every year; for which damascened and ivory-handled sickles were sometimes used." (Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, p. 29.)

‡Physical softness may go quite well with the cult of athletics, as Socrates was aware.

soil is merely dirt; the sculptor's stone, the engraver's wood are materials to be respected, but not so other stone or wood. For them it is unbelievable that a lifetime may be well and happily spent in learning, in mastering and in using the qualities of these common things, in leaving on them the mark of one's own mind and will. Yet that is the privilege of the responsible workman, who knows that each thing, like each person, has its own nature, and that this nature must be "humoured, not drove". That is why things made by men's hands have the character of humanity—something otherwise unobtainable, something which, more than beauty, is the endearing property of true art.

It follows that much in men's labour which to those outside may appear monotonously repetitive is to the workman himself the continuance of an intimacy which he has no desire to break off—much like a conversation in French, uncomprehendingly overheard. Here are reflections by a quarryman on a parson's remark to a fellow-worker ("You must find it *very* monotonous work, eh?") "Not only was the parson seeing the successful result of lifelong training, there was the knowledge of centuries behind it. The quarry itself was the planning of one man's life. Slowly yet surely he had lengthened his workings until he had surrounded an area of stone so that no other quarry should be able to cut in on it. Not one block came out of it without bringing a sense of satisfaction because it was in proper order and according to plan. Yet because a stranger saw a man punching away at a square stone for half an hour he had to suggest it was boring work. Evidently he did not know the interest in making something permanent; a stone that will go into a building and there outlast many generations can hardly be without some interest to the producer."*

Observe that the parson would have remained within his rights had he said that *he* would have found the work unbearable; and a farmer or sailor might reasonably have said the same thing, and as reasonably have been told by the quarryman that a parson's or farmer's or sailor's work would have been so to him. No one suggests that any and every man should find any and every sort of work congenial; on the contrary, every man to his trade, on the understanding that every other trade in its proper and natural conditions is fit for someone and is consonant with human dignity. But this draws implications with it. It implies in the first place every man's right to the free choice of a way of life, to the exercise of that function which he has natural ability to fulfil. This point has been urged by the present Pope, and it rests on the teaching of St. Thomas†: "The principles of government would be flouted if men were kept by their ruler from exercising their proper functions (unless, it may be, exceptionally, in temporary crisis.") But in our present society—in peace as in war—this is just the fate of masses of men; supposing them to find work at all, and supposing it to be good in itself, it is still not their own choice, and one man's work is another's drudgery.

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*Eric Benfield, *Purbeck Shop* (1940), pp. 88-9.
†C.G., III, 71.

There is a further implication.. Work which in itself and in its natural conditions is good and honourable and rational may become the contrary of all this through perversion of the conditions. This may be so if some task which in a normal society would be a brief incident in a day's varied work is made by unnatural specialization to become a life's employment, which it never was meant to be. It may be so if for penal or economic reasons potentially useful labour is deliberately made useless.* And again it may be so if the nature and purpose of certain work is distorted by the use of machines.

With this mention of machines we come to the "last wave" of controversy. It is widely thought that Eric Gill was simply "against machinery," and that there the matter ends. Let me reply with one quotation. "Obviously machinery as such is consistent with Christianity, though many machines may be used for objects which are inconsistent with Christianity." That sentence from one of his earliest essays† expresses a view which he found no occasion to withdraw, though he returned to it continually with amplifications and distinctions. I will summarize the results.

Clear thought on the matter of machines requires a preliminary distinction between their invention and their use. It is as inventions that they make their most plausible appeal—as proofs of the ingenuity of the human mind; and it is commonly said that it would be foolish or sinful not to use these visible triumphs of man's peculiar faculties. But that is an illegitimate leap in argument. It is only for its speculative achievement that any invention is good in itself. When the inventor can say "The nature of physical forces being such, mathematical relations being such, these materials being such, a thing so made will act thus and thus"—he has brought an accession to human knowledge which, great or small, is independent of any practical application. But in this sense, and other things being equal, a new and more deadly poison gas is as creditable to its inventor as a new and more potently healing drug; and here the least thinking mind begins to discriminate. The principle is the same for machines. Granting them all to be more or less ingenious, it is still an open question whether a given machine is worth using, whether what it does is worth doing, whether it works more good or harm.

What then do machines do? What are they for? Some do things worth doing which otherwise could not be done at all. Such is a clock—it is not an improved sundial but something really different; and though the provision of mechanical time has had some effects of doubtful good, it would be unreasonable to

*"The workers from the National Workshops who were set the task of wheeling about soil on the Champ de Mars just to keep them employed, were not slow to become the rioters of June. Dostoevsky's convict, compelled to move tree trunks in the morning and in the evening put them back in their original positions, underwent the tortures of hell itself. Work of which the worker knows the futility and which deprives effort of its normal purpose is nothing more than slavery." (Borne and Henry, *A Philosophy of Work*, chap. 3.)

†"*In A Strange Land*, p. 20; *It All Goes Together*, p. 22."

deprecate the invention. Eric Gill certainly did not. Some machines, again, do things which might be done otherwise, but do them with an increase of speed which for some reason may be thought specially valuable. To this class belong, perhaps, some kinds of medical apparatus, and more obviously machines of transport. Approval of these is subject to one's considering the necessity for the speed; speed is far from a good in itself, and the exploitation of rapid travel has been principally disastrous; nevertheless one might admit exceptionally what one disapproved as a rule. With such machines Eric Gill was not particularly concerned. But there is another class of them—probably the largest—which was very much his concern: those which supplant the human hand in the making of things. Their defenders call them more perfect and more developed tools; to which he replied with an irreproachable distinction.* Tools, he said, were means of helping a man to make a thing; machines were means of making which had to be helped by the man. "If you are responsible for the form and quality of the thing made, then whatever apparatus you use is a tool rather than a machine. And as that responsibility diminishes, so the apparatus becomes more and more a machine until the point is reached when, as with the latest automatic machinery, the machinist has no responsibility whatever." To put it another way—a tool is an instrument of precision because it enables the user of it to do precisely what he intends with the particular work in hand; it serves, as his bare hands could not, his idea of the thing to be made; it can be adapted to the individuality of the material. A machine may seem an instrument of precision; it is not one, for it cannot enable its user to approach more closely his own idea; it can only force on the material a shape invented by someone else without reference to the work in hand.

Consider this in the light of an example—that of a wheelwright making felloes half a century since.† "The tools were axe and adze and sometimes hand-saw, and the implements (besides a square) a chopping-block and a felloe-horse. Yet it is vain to go into details at this point; for when the simple apparatus had all been got together, a never-ending series of variations was introduced by the material . . . . Knots here, shakes there, rind-galls, waney edges (edges with more or less of the bark in them), thicknesses, thinnesses, were for ever affording new chances or forbidding previous solutions, whereby a fresh problem confronted the workman's ingenuity every few minutes. He had no band-saw (as now) to drive, with ruthless unintelligence, through every resistance. The timber was far from being a prey, a helpless victim, to a machine. Rather it would lend its own subtle virtues to the man who knew how to humour it . . . . At the bench you learn where a hard knot may be even helpful and a wind-shake a source of strength in a felloe . . . ." Contrast with such work as this the processes of a modern

*Cf. *Sacred and Secular* (1940), pp. 102-6.
†George Sturt, *The Wheelwright's Shop* (1934), p. 45.

factory where the "ruthless unintelligence" of the band-saw has in fact ousted the intelligence of ten or twenty or fifty men. It is clear in the first place that the work done on the timber is not the same work. The machine does not and cannot do the work of so many wheelwrights or carpenters; it supplants them without replacing them; its products are essentially make-shifts. Secondly it is clear that the workmen at the machine are not the same kind of men as those who had used their hands and tools. The work is no longer "life and breath to the maker," the core of a human vocation sufficient to itself; the slight moral responsibility left to the machine-minder is no substitute for the full moral and full intellectual responsibility of the true workman; and if in some cases the machinist may still seem to "rejoice in his labour," this is either because of the human intercourse which accidentally accompanies it, or at best because of a schoolboy pleasure in handling big machines which rests on sheer ignorance of the scope and nature of adult human work. Who then, or what, has gained by the change? Not the timber itself, which has been clumsily maltreated. Not the user, who must accept less suitable and less lasting goods. Not the worker, whose personality has been stunted. Only the factory owner,* who has lessened his costs by the degradation of men and material; and even he has not much advanced towards gaining his own soul.

What is true of this example would seem to be true of most, and the plea of Eric Gill was not for the indiscriminate abolition of machines but against their indiscriminate acceptance. Granted that certain things which are called machines have something left of the qualities of a tool; granted that a particular machine may have very special advantages to set against disadvantages; let this and let every case be considered on its merits. Is the use of this or that machine compatible with good workmanship, with the real benefit of the consumer, with the dignity and responsibility of the workman? Are the things made things worth making? What of this "labour-saving device?" The urban housewife who uses it escapes an hour of rational work, but are not the makers of it condemned to a lifetime of irrational drudgery? These are fundamental questions, and they are not answered by the comfortable assertion that "the machine has come to stay." In a reasonable and humane society machines—and inventions generally—would not be allowed to stay if their use ran counter to the real interests of the community. And there is nothing intrinsically impossible in the control of such things. The Chinese invented gunpowder without an immediate sequel of irresponsible destruction; they invented printing but did not uproot calligraphy; they invented the tempered scale and yet retained the traditional modes. In the modern world a number of inventions have been temporarily or permanently suppressed through commercial covetousness. Is all restriction unthinkable in the cause of good work, social justice, and the dignity of the human person?

Such in brief was Eric Gill's attitude to our industrial society. Apart from misapprehensions of detail, it often evoked the general criticism that

*"In those days, a convenient collective term for the shareholders."

one who thus viewed the modern world was so remote from the practical and the practicable that his message could but be vain; that he himself could not possibly live in accordance with his principles; and that his greatness was after all of the kind he so often depreciated that of a genius in the fine arts, to be remembered for certain sculptures, engravings, drawings, and for lettering in stone which was the best for centuries. To this the most general answer is that if a man is a prophet at all, he is to be judged primarily by the truth of what he says, not by the numbers of those who act upon it. He addresses himself to human beings possessed of free-will; he says: "The state of things is not as you think but is thus and thus; if you do not change, your fate will be this or that." He knows the truth and is bound to speak it; what ensues must rest with others. The city to which he speaks may perhaps repent in sackcloth and ashes; perhaps it may perish utterly; perhaps a few will escape from the burning. The propet's greatness, the prophet's duty, remain the same. And it is important to note that though Eric Gill's ideas were counter to modern customs and assumptions, they were never counter to human nature; he did not suppose that man could be naturally perfect or that malice and original sin would somehow be outgrown. The kind of society he believed in was something that had existed historically in many times and places; and however unlikely an early return to it might be, an eventual return (with whatever modifications) was a possibility which could only be denied by those who denied free-will.

On such likelihood or unlikelihood he took different views at different times—in his last years he had little hope indeed. Meanwhile he was always eager to find a palliative for particular evils, to propose a second best as possible here and now, though it must be inevitably on a lower plane of things than the real best. This was in accord with his practice in the immediate work of engraving or type-designing; if a client rejected what he thought best himself, he would patiently listen to suggestions and use them if he could. They might do much less than justice to the true nature of the work, but provided they were not quite absurd, provided they left to be done something at least worth doing, he would submit to them with a cheerful resignation. In a like spirit he advocated some social measures which in a really Christian society would not be called for—workmen's ownership when there seemed little expectation of widely diffused private property, monetary reform when Christian poverty seemed too distant a goal.

Possessing such practical tolerance, he found no great difficulty about consistent living within an alien society. The first thing was to see and accept the truth; the next, if society allowed one (and it allowed him) to do one's own work in a human and responsible way; after that, to encourage others to see and work in the same manner; finally, in supplying one's needs, to rely as much as possible on those of like thinking, but where reasonable possibility failed, to look elsewhere without superstitious scruple. If one's own friends and the local small tradesmen could meet one's ordinary necessities, it would be unjust

and foolish to disregard their claims. But if something one needed was to be had now only from towns, only from the big shops, only as made by machines, one saw to it that it was good of its kind and bought it without ado. "What about travelling by train"? innocent undergraduates would ask, and could scarcely believe it was not a poser.

To those who knew him, to those who followed him, the greatness of Eric Gill must be essentially different from that of those whom the world calls artists. He made indeed more things of beauty than it is often given to men to make, but to understand him one has to pass through art and beyond. When I think of Eric Gill, I think of the words of Christopher Smart: "In my nature I quested for beauty, but God, God hath sent me to sea for pearls."

THE VINE

When wind and winter turn our vineyard
To a bitter Calvary,
What hands come out and crucify us
Like the innocent vine?

How long will starlight weep as sharp as thorns
In the night of our desolate life?
How long will moonlight fear to free the naked prisoner?
Or is there no deliverer?

A mob of winds, on Holy Thursday, come like murderers
And batter the walls of our locked and terrified souls.
Our doors are down, and our defence is done.
Good Friday's rains, in Roman order,
March, with sharpest lances, up our vineyard hill.

More dreadful than St. Peter's cry
When he was being swallowed by the sea,
Cries out our anguish: "O! We are abandoned!"
When in our life we see the ruined vine
Cut open by the cruel spring,
Ploughed by the furious season!

As if we had forgotten how the whips of winter
And the cross of April
Would all be lost in one bright miracle.
For look! The vine on Calvary is bright with branches!
See how the leaves laugh in the light,
And how the whole hill smiles with flowers:
And know how all our numbered veins must run
With life, like the sweet vine, when it is full of sun.

Frater M. Louis, O.C.S.O.
(Thomas Merton.)

FOR MY BROTHER:

REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION, 1943

Sweet brother, if I do not sleep
My eyes are flowers for your tomb;
And if I cannot eat my bread,
My fasts shall live like willows where you died.
If in the heat I find no water for my thirst,
My thirst shall turn to springs for you, poor traveller.

Where, in what desolate and smokey country,
Lies your poor body, lost and dead?
And in what landscape of disaster
Has your unhappy spirit lost its road?

Come, in my labor find a resting place
And in my sorrows lay your head,
Or rather take my life and blood
And buy yourself a better bed—
Or take my breath and take my death
And buy yourself a better rest.

When all the men of war are shot
And flags have fallen into dust,
Your cross and mine shall tell men still
Christ died on each, for both of us.

For in the wreckage of your April Christ lies slain,
And Christ weeps in the ruins of my spring:
The money of Whose tears shall fall
Into your weak and friendless hand,
And buy you back to your own land:
The silence of Whose tears shall fall
Like bells upon your alien tomb.
Hear them and come: they call you home.

Frater M. Louis, O.C.S.O.
(Thomas Merton.)

WHO'S WHO AND WHAT

THE *Catholic Art Quarterly* is especially honored to present His Excellency Archbishop Richard J. Cushing's "LIVING TO WORK." Nothing could be more heartening then the knowledge that this very fine article was delivered as an address by one of the most prominent and well loved members of the American heirarchy to a group of businessmen at the Boston Chamber of Commerce Members' Luncheon, December last. Here we have a practical application of the association's ideals.

Being worthy of such leadership is in itself a responsibility. It may be fitting at this point to call to mind that the *Catholic Art Quarterly*, when first founded by Sister Esther, was named the *Christian Social Art Quarterly*. Later this was changed to the present title for the sake of brevity. The focal idea in founding the association was to bridge the gulf which our age has placed between the artist and society at large. Often people who are interested in social problems look upon art as "caviar for the general"; and some artists have never thought about the social crisis, other than using it occasionally for self-advertising. It is necessary, however, to think of both together, as they are part of each other. When we disabuse people of the false idea that art has nothing to do with society, we shall have attained victory. We are grateful to Archbishop Cushing for stressing in fluent and competent fashion matters which can never be stressed too often.

"CONSIDERATIONS ON ERIC GILL' by Walter Shewring originally appeared in the *Dublin Review*, (London, October, 1944); it is reprinted here by the kind permission of the Editor and Publisher. A masterly and definitive evaluation of Eric Gill is of immense value to members of the C.A.A. A reading and rereading of Mr. Shewring's article should convince everyone that we now possess such.

The readers of the *Catholic Art Quarterly* are more fortunate than those of the *Dublin Review*, thanks to the customary generosity of Graham Carey. He has loaned us his cut of the harpoon head of whalebone discussed in the article.

One of the outstanding younger poets of the day has kindly given permission to reprint two poems which appear in "*Thirty Poems*." This volume, published by New Directions, has been deservedly well received by the critics. Many of them, however, are puzzled because Thomas Merton, educated at the Lycee of Paris, and England's Cambridge, is today known as Frater M. Louis, and resides in the Trappist monastery at Gesthemani, Kentucky. Our readers should not find the fact too puzzling.

C. A. A. NEWS

THE Eastern Region held its meeting on March 9th, 1945, from 1:30 P.M. to 5 P.M., at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. Reverend Gerard Maguire, C. S.P. was chairman. Reverend Charles A. Hart, Ph.D. of the Catholic University of America, spoke on the Philosophy of Art. Reverend Thomas J. Lynch, College of Chesnut Hill, spoke on the Philosophy of the Lyric. Reverend Mathew Sullivan, S.J., of Loyola College, discussed "The Aesthetics of Modern Art." An exhibition of students' work was held in the gallery of the Art Department, and Reverend M. A. Coutorier, O.P. was Exhibition Chairman. ¶ The Central Region held its seventh regional meeting at Trinity High School, River Forest, Illinois, on April 2, 1945.

The theme of the meeting was "Art and Rural Living."

The morning session was opened by a Missa Recitata. Reverend David C. Fullmer, Assistant Superintendent of Chicago Catholic Schools, welcomed the delegates. Rt. Reverend Luigi G. Ligutti, Executive Secretary of N.C.R.L.C. spoke on "Art and Rural Living."

Sister Helena presided at the business meeting which followed dinner. A vote of thanks to Sister Helena who was retiring from office was proposed and seconded. Details of matters considered will be given in the next issue.

The *Catholic Digest* has asked the C.A.A. to conduct an art contest for a new set of covers for the magazine. It would involve twelve separate covers. A cash prize would be offered, and a panel of judges chosen from C.A.A. membership would choose the prize-winning covers. All who are interested are asked to send in their opinions.

¶ It has been suggested that the C.A.A. learn from the American Artist's Association. This group puts out a series of Christmas cards and these retail at a reasonable price. They have done much to raise the standard of Christmas cards. Our own association should certainly do as much. Such a project, however, demands wholehearted cooperation, and we ask for opinions and comments.

¶ To date we have the promise of two summer schools, and hope to announce the opening of others in the Pentecost issue. There will be a regular school and workshop session of six weeks, with or without college credit, at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa. The subjects of writing-lettering and anatomy will be the chief studies. This session will begin June 18th. The Studio Angelico also plans to have a week's session in August, if possible, the date to be announced later. John Stevens, due to a crowded schedule, will be unable to offer summer school facilities this year.

¶ Ade Bethune has offered to run a correspondence course in the *Quarterly* in two-dimensional design. Those who would take the course would pay a nominal sum to cover the cost of mailing and incidentals connected with the criticism. All who are interested are urged to write to the editor before June 15th. If the response is sufficiently enthusiastic, (and it should be), plans will be drawn up to inaugurate this course.

¶ Lee Bowen has recently arrived in India. His addres is now: Warrant Officer Henry L. Bowen, Hq. AAF, IBT, (A61), APO 671, c/o P. M., New York.

¶ We have been corrected in our placement of baptismal dates. A testy subscriber was pleased with our recognition of Bob Amendola's zeal, but felt that the very Catholic Amendolas would object to listing him as an adult convert.

¶ We are grateful to the Liturgy for we can unabashedly announce that the Penetcost issue will appear within the Pentecost cycle.

This *Catholic Art Association* is NOT just another art association

It is THE art association for *Catholics*

Because it is based on Catholic ideology and enunciates art principles which are consistent with Catholic thought;

Because it upholds high standards of art and supports these standards with strong reasons;

Because it assists Catholic artists to harmonize their profession with their Faith by contacts with other Catholic artists; and

Because it brings to light the efforts being made toward the true revival of Catholic art in this country.

The Catholic Art Association holds national conventions at regular intervals. Between these intervals the several regions, according to their needs, arrange special meetings, exhibitions and demonstrations. Professional and educational interests are furthered by the activities of the Professional and Educational committees through their distinct exhibit and conference programs. Wherever possible, especially during the summer months, co-operative activities on art projects are sponsored by the Advisory Board. Such activities in Catholic environments offer opportunities for self-advancement through the stimulation of Catholic thought.

The C.A.A. maintains a small but choice art library for the use of its members. Several types of traveling exhibits are available. The library is philosophical in content while the exhibits aim to exemplify that philosophy in practice.

The *Catholic Art Quarterly*, published with ecclesiastical approval, is the organ of the Association. It is a magazine which has been proving itself of technical, critical, and instructive value to an ever increasing number of readers here and abroad. Contributors to the *Quarterly* are nationally known authorities in their various fields. Although the editorial policy makes no pretense toward news gathering, the consistent reading of the publication develops a well-rounded knowledge of current catholic art thought and achievement throughout the country. A *Quarterly* subscription is included with each type of membership.